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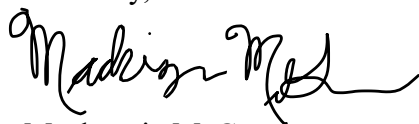
Dear Madame Chair and Committee,

I'm writing to you as an opponent of HB 2299. I've been teaching college writing for six years, and I'm currently an instructor at the University of Kansas. I believe this bill is unnecessary. I wholeheartedly agree that antisemitism is a danger to the Jewish people and should not be tolerated by any institution. However, there is nothing crucial in this bill that is not already enshrined in law. Further, KU already has a robust nondiscrimination policy, as well as processes for addressing discrimination when it occurs.¹

Two things about this bill disturb me: first is expanding the definition of antisemitism to include criticism of the state of Israel; second is deputizing the attorney general to investigate complaints. The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance defines antisemitism, in part, as criticizing Israel as "a racist endeavor" and "drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis."² This language seems to target debates surrounding the Israel-Hamas War. This is a direct threat to free speech, as this bill would specifically forbid certain critiques from being discussed at all. The simple threat of the consequences outlined in this bill would force me to limit which viewpoints can be discussed in class, for fear that discussion might be interpreted as tolerance of these ideas. Importantly, although the bill attempts to make an exception for "coursework that is dedicated to the education and study of world religions or cultures,"³ this doesn't account for the many other courses in which students may benefit from discussion of opposing viewpoints, including writing classes. Part of my job is to help students think critically about different viewpoints, research them, and articulate their own responses. Restricting debate restricts my ability to teach these skills. The way this bill unnecessarily limits free speech through threat of legal action is counterproductive to the goals of my course and many others.

In conclusion, I urge you to vote against HB 2299. This unnecessary government overreach threatens free speech and prevents educators from doing our jobs effectively.

Sincerely,



Mackenzie McGee

¹ University of Kansas, Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. "Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action." *KU Policy Library*, <https://policy.ku.edu/IOA/nondiscrimination>.

² "Working definition of antisemitism," *International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance*, <https://holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism>.

³ Kansas State Legislature, House, Committee on Education. "House Bill No. 2299." *Kansas State Legislature*, https://www.kslegislature.gov/li/b2025_26/measures/documents/hb2299_00_0000.pdf.